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"TO MEET THE DEFENCE REQUIREMENTS OF WAR EQUIPMENT AND WEAPONS CREATE IMMEDIATELY A STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE"

BY

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In times of National emergency, it cannot be possible for any country to be entirely and totally independent in regard to all its industrial needs. It is particularly so in relation to the needs of the armed forces. India cannot aspire to become completely independent in this respect for some years to come. I do not know to what extent India has mutual understanding between herself and foreign countries for the supply of war equipment for us.

In times of war, reliance cannot always be placed on external supply of essential War stores owing to the uncertainty of Sea communications being kept open.

India has an unlimited manpower. She has very large armed forces. But what good are these collections of men, if we have not the material to equip them with. Material in this respect means the latest weapons, equipment, motor vehicles of all types, aircraft and shipping. In an emergency like the one forced on us at the present moment, we must produce a large percentage of these requirements in our own arsenals, factories and ship building yards. For this a good foundation for a co-ordinated industrial set up in this country must be laid down now and laid firmly. It is not too ~~easy~~. Every day delayed is one year lost in the industrial development of India.

To my mind the very first step to be taken in this respect is to set up a body of high ranking representatives, persons from the Armed forces in India, the appropriate civil departments and of industrial magnates of India. This committee of representatives which should be called the 'Strategic Industrial Planning Committee' should prepare 'appreciations' of the estimated total needs of equipment of:-

1) the Defence Services of India; and
2) the Civil requirements.

both in times of peace and war, and then follow up with another 'appreciation' of the raw materials required - available in India and those to be imported from other countries. This committee should be assisted by another committee of suitable representatives as above. The task of this committee, to be known as the 'Industrial Census Committee' will be to carry out a census of India's factories in detail, and to work out what can be produced under existing conditions and what further additions in machinery, machine tools and technicians are required in each factory to meet the balance. This Committee should investigate and see what portion of commercial requirements

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could be regarded as war potential e.g., mechanical transport a very essential requirement in modern wars. Can factories manufacturing motor cars undertake to produce M.T. for war purposes using the plant and technicians intended to produce vehicles for commercial use? This might mean the civil transportation department using vehicles for commercial purposes which with only slight modifications can be converted for war use. Tracked vehicles are an essential type of motor vehicles required in war. Should certain factories only produce tracked vehicles for agricultural use in peace time converting into tank and tractor producing factories in war without any time lag? Could charabancs and heavy lorries required to carry passengers and heavy loads in peace time be converted into heavy military vehicles in war time and so on? This would mean fixing up of engine power of motor vehicles for civil needs to fit in as far as possible with these required in war.

There must also be competent 'Designing Staff' composed of representatives from all the Defence Services and appropriate civil services whose main duties will be the designing of various items of war equipment integrated with civilian day to day requirements. Working with this staff there should be a "Development Staff" similarly composed to concentrate on the development of articles designed and their constant inspection.

We shall then require a body of scientists and mechanical experts to carry out scientific research relating to industry for the manufacture in India of our war equipment. This research should be continuous. We have 'top class' of our own scientists. We must take a census of them both in India and abroad and make the fullest use of them in this respect. They MUST be offered really attractive salaries as an incentive to work in India and NOT abroad because of the very high salaries they get there.

The various committees and staffs must carry out detailed survey of the industrial progress of the country at fixed periodical intervals guided by the appreciations of India's General staff in regard of type of warfare foreseen and possible theatres of operations anticipated, for, on the nature of these two factors depends a good deal of the designing of war equipment. Further there should be a 'Foreign Liaison Committee', members of which should be selected from the various committees stated above. This committee would work under the directions of 'Strategic planning committee' visiting foreign countries for the purpose of 'Liaison' in this respect. All the other committees would similarly be sub-ordinated to the 'Strategic Planning Committee'.

Finally, it should be the responsiblity of the 'Strategic Planning Committee' to draw a detailed plan in peace time on the following matters:

1) Factories which must exist in peace and in war mainly to produce material for the armed forces;

2) Civilian factories which should in war be converted into factories producing war material;

3) Policy for import of machinery and machine tools which cannot be manufactured in India also for import of raw material not available in India and allocation of this to factories.

4) Policy for training adequate number of technicians in various trades and countries where they are to be trained.

5) Phased producing programme for type and quantity of various war material, from D minus or D plus day of mobilization for war, in each factory.

6) Policy in regard to such goods for civilian peace time requirements which are not essential normally in war as are to cease to be manufactured in factories and from when.

This plan must be revised every two years.

America had a splendid set up of a combined research department before the last war which helped that great country to meet the gigantic demand of not only her own vastly expended army, but also of the allied powers as a whole. This department was composed of military and civilian members. The civilian character of the department was emphasised because of continuity of research in the development of an industrial mobilization plan. The research analysts were experienced specialists in the various fields which formed the basis of such a plan.

Research was divided into the following categories:-

1) The economic studies group exploring general economic problems of the United States and other nations with reference to mobilization of natural resources and industry, economic warfare and belligerent occupation.

2) The Civilian War Agencies Group examined the war functions of civilian war agencies and evaluated their effectiveness in war time.

3) The material studies group analysed and appraised economic information related to raw materials; including those obtained from agriculture and mining, with special reference to essential and strategical commodities in the internal economy of the U.S.

4) The Civilian Requirement Group was charged with the research necessary to determine the basis requirements for the civilian economy during period of mobilization and war.

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5) The Man power Studies Group was concerned with the analysis and synthesis of existing data dealing with labour forces under conditions of mobilization and demobilization (conversion and reconversion) for employment in factories.

6) The Foreign Resources Group investigated and evaluated the economic capacity of any political entity or geographical area to conduct warfare with special references to its strategic relationship to the U.S.

7) The Military Requirements Group was responsible for the preparation of studies of general and specific material and personal requirements for all branches of the armed forces.

8) The Liaison Office established communication between the department of research and other agencies and maintained close association with rosters of Industrial and Professional personnel for the manning of emergency agencies.

This organization did not engage in primary research. Its purpose was to carry out secondary research to collect from governmental and civilian research agencies and to utilize for the objectives of the Army Industrial College all available data that concerned the mobilization or demobilization of America's economic resources. Therefore, its efforts in no way duplicated the study made elsewhere in the U.S.A.

Here is a leaf, a very profitable leaf, paying big dividends which we can take off the American books of industrial plans. A close study of the policy pursued by Great Britain and by U.S.S.R. in this vital matter of industrialization to meet the needs of their armed forces would and should give invaluable material for an Indian 'plan' for such Industrial and Defence requirements.

I feel whilst some of the key industries must be nationalised -the bulk of our Industries must be in the private sector as then there being a competition between business concerns - there will be progress and speed in the manufacturing of many of the 'Defence needs' as it happens in other Democratic countries. Without competition there can be no progress. In the 'Public Sector' <u>there is no competition</u>.

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This will ensure the ability of India to produce in her own factories war equipment and weapons to meet a large percentage of the needs of her armed forces in peace and in war, if not nearly the whole. India showed what she can do - in Great War II. We ARE capable of expanding ten fold of what we did in the 1939-1945 War.

So let us get cracking.

This article was first written by me in 1946.